

New Board of Governors' Member Dedicated to Overcoming Stigma of Hearing Loss

By Torryn P. Brazell

In the last issue of *AT*, we heard from Stephanie Sjoblad, AuD, about why she chose to become board certified. In this issue, I am pleased to share a discussion with the newest American Board of Audiology (ABA) Board of Governors' member, Meagan Lewis, AuD, who is board certified and holds the Cochlear Implant Specialty Certification (CISC®).

Dr. Lewis is the clinical manager of audiology at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She received her doctorate in audiology from the University of North Carolina in 2007. She serves on the NC Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She will be serving on the ABA Board of Governors for a term of three years.

At Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, Dr. Lewis supervises 12 other audiologists and provides services across the lifespan. She has particular interest in diagnostics and cochlear implants.

"I am privileged to work with people of all ages—from infants to older adults," she shared. "Much of my time is spent evaluating and following our cochlear implant patients."

Dr. Lewis' interest in cochlear implants is a personal one. She has a twin brother who, at two and a half

years old, was diagnosed with hearing loss.

"My brother has worn hearing aids since we were toddlers and functions well with them," she said. "As a young child, he answered many questions from the other children in our school about what his aids were and why they were needed. Like so many of our patients, he went through a period of time in which he was embarrassed by his hearing aids and was teased. Those experiences make me want to confront the stigma of hearing loss."

Her personal experience not only led her to the practice of audiology but also to board and specialty certification. She held her CCC-A for one year and has maintained board certification since 2008. Dr. Lewis earned her CISC in 2011.

"I chose board certification because I feel that the future of the profession is moving toward it," she explained. "I earned my CISC because I felt it was important to distinguish myself as having experience and knowledge specific to cochlear implants. It is a mark that demonstrates to other professionals and the public that I possess certain skills."

Dr. Lewis also feels that holding a license is an indicator of meeting minimum requirements to practice audiology, and that certification




Meagan Lewis, AuD

shows up-to-date knowledge in the field or a specialty.

"The connotation of certification implies striving for excellence or competency," she explained. "For ABA-certified audiologists, I feel that the 'bar' is raised; the expectation for continuing education is higher—both in terms of hours required and in the content of the sessions, in order to promote excellence within the profession."

"I also like that ABA is an organization created by audiologists for audiologists," she said. "That is one of the main reasons I chose to volunteer for the ABA Board of Governors. I wanted to be a part of the group of audiologists who help to shape the future of our profession."

"My personal commitment to alleviating the stigma that often accompanies hearing loss has been a driving force in my life and career, and I hope to build on that as a Board of Governors member," she said. 

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